Prof. Manuel Trajtenberg
Chairman

פרופ' מנואל טרכטנברג
יושב-ראש ות"ת

July 5, 2012
Jerusalem
LC6373

Dear Prof. Dirk Helbing,
ETH Zürich
Scientific Coordinator, FuturICT FET Flagship

The Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) of the Council for Higher Education would like to express its support for the FuturICT FET flagship proposal, coordinated on the Israeli side by Prof. Shlomo Havlin from Bar-Ilan University and Prof. Eshel Ben-Yaakov from Tel-Aviv University, and including 30 leading Israeli research groups from Bar-Ilan University, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, The Hebrew University, The Technion – The Israeli Institute of Technology and Tel-Aviv University.

Achieving FuturICT Flagship's stated goal – to understand human society by harnessing revolutionary data gathering and processing technology – will benefit society as a whole, as well as its individual members. Some of the benefits, such as design of robust and better defended infrastructure and development of new methods for coping with economic crises, are highly important for Israel. Israel's large and diverse ICT research community, as well as Israeli researchers in the social sciences, will no doubt take an important part in this effort.

The PBC is already involved in funding several related projects. Among them is the Israeli Center of Research Excellence (I-CORE) in Computer Sciences which is aimed at foundational research in algorithm design and at exporting computer science knowledge to other scientific disciplines. The I-CORE in Computer Sciences is led by Prof. Yishai Mansour of Tel Aviv University, and incorporates up to date 27 leading researchers from Tel Aviv University, the Weizmann Institute and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It started operating in October 2011 and has been allocated a budget of 9M Euro (45M NIS) for a 5-year period[1]. Within a few months, another 10 I-COREs will be established, some of which may also be relevant to this effort.

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[1] Details may be found in http://www.i-core.org.il/Computer-Sciences and http://www.icore-algo.org.il/

Other initiatives in Israel, such as the Israeli Smart Grid (ISG) or the Israel National Cyber Initiative, will also have profound synergies with the FuturICT Flagship's research program.

The PBC sees the FET Flagships program as a unique opportunity to achieve new scientific breakthroughs through collaboration between the Israeli and European research communities, and as a project of national importance.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Manuel Trajtenberg
Chairman, Planning and Budgeting Committee
The Council for Higher Education in Israel